

Dr. BLONDEL confuted: 4
OR, THE
LADIES vindicated,
With Regard to the
POWER of IMAGINATION
in Pregnant Women:
Together with a
CIRCULAR and GENERAL
ADDRESS to the LADIES,
on this OCCASION.

By JOHN HENRY MAUCLERC, M. D.



L O N D O N:

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A
CIRCULAR and GENERAL
ADDRESS
TO THE
LADIES
OF
Great Britain and Ireland.

LADIES,

IT may seem strange, that a Physical Dissertation should be offered to your Examination and Protection: But it is not less strange, that you should be arraigned, and condemned, without having the Opportunity of defending yourselves; nay, without knowing scarce, what Injury has been done you! Dr. *Blondel's* Dis-
pute

DEDICATION.

pute with Dr. *Turner*, made no small Noise, for the Time, in the learned World ; and his Treatise against him has been generally judged unanswerable. Whether it be really so, or not, I submit entirely to all future competent Judges. However, I shall frankly own, I should not have answered it, if I had not been prompted to it by the Occasion, which I shall relate in my Preface. This little Piece, therefore, Ladies, belongs of Right to you ; and I could not offer it more properly, than to the Party concerned. Your own Cause lies at stake. I come to your Assistance, but I want Assistance myself. And, though it is unusual to lay such Disputes before your Tribunal, it is not without Precedent ; since Dr. *Slare* claimed your Patronage, in the same manner, for his Vindication of Sugars. It is true, there are some hard Passages in this Dispute for the Ladies, as well as for many other Readers : But it may be said in my Behalf, that I am there talking directly to Dr. *Blondel*, and that there is nothing, that can offend the most scrupulously modest, nor hinder the full Consideration of the Subject.

Nevertheless, I am far from thinking I have done the utmost for the Cause. I was forced to answer Dr. *Blondel* in his own Way. Whether I have succeeded or not, the Cause remains still the same, and will always remain upon its own Bottom. Nature cannot be gainsaid : Truth will have the Victory at last.

DEDICATION.

A true History of Facts, is what I most wanted for refuting of Dr. *Blondel*, and settling this Controversy. If I had been inclin'd, of my own Accord, to write on this Subject methodically, I should have built on that Foundation: But how difficult it is to collect any such, every one knows! And the pleasant Accident which I must here relate, is both an Instance of this Difficulty, and a further Apology for my Appealing to you, Ladies, on this Occasion.

Whilst I was writing the ensuing Refutation, I thought I had the fairest Opportunity that cou'd be wish'd, for beginning the direct Proof of the Question by certain Matter of Fact; but I was most unaccountably disappointed. There came an honest Country-Girl, to be House-Maid, where I then was, from whom I learnt, very unexpectedly, this curious Particular, relating to herself: *That she was mark'd in the Neck with a Beef-Stake, because her Mother, when with Child, had longed for it; and that she could eat, nay, loved Beef raw, better than any wise dress'd, for the same Reason.* She said moreover, *that she would eat some in my Presence, whenever I pleased.* Indeed the Mark had very much the Resemblance of a Beef-Stake.

Well, says I to myself, this happens very luckily for my Purpose; I must not let this Opportunity slip: Accordingly, the first Day we
had

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had Beef-Stakes, I went into the Kitchen: Come, says I to the Girl, let me see now, what you promis'd me. *No*, says the Cook-Maid, *there's none to be spared*. Nay, says I, she must eat her Dinner. *Well, but it must be broil'd a little*, replied the Cook. The Girl seemed a little concern'd. At last she said, *she was ready to eat it, with a little Pepper and Salt*. Oh! says I, that shall break no Squares. So to eating she fell: Then came little Miss, who ask'd me, *Whether I would make the Maid sick?* Last of all comes Mrs. House-keeper, who tells me in a great Passion, *You shan't kill the Maid*. In a Moment after the whole *Posse* of the Kitchen was ready to fall upon me; the whole House was in an Uproar; and, I believe, would have torn me to Pieces, if I had not made my Escape. This was very vexing; for the Girl had, by this Time, almost eat up the Slice she had cut off, and I had consented to, for the Experiment. After the Fury was over, I told them, that there was a great Controversy among Physicians, upon that Subject; that I had taken the Women's Part, in a Dispute I once had with some Divines, upon that Head; that I had just flatter'd myself with the Hopes of convincing my Adversaries, by that Matter of Fact; but that, since they had thus disappointed me, I must put off my Design till some better Opportunity.

This

DEDICATION.

This is a plain Narrative of my Adventure, without any Flourish or Disguise.

Therefore I thought the only Course I had left, was thus to address myself to the LADIES, and to desire them to supply me with proper Materials for Building a true History of Facts, in order to confute our Adversaries, by unexceptionable Vouchers and Histories. I could have produced some very curious and remarkable Family Accounts of my own; and I have been since told of several others; and in particular, a *Frenchman* of *Languedoc* inform'd me lately, that he had often, in a Warren of his Father's, procured Rabbits, coloured or speckled *white, black, or reddish*, by laying white, black, or reddish-colour'd Rags before them, according to *Jacob's* Stratagem. Mrs. *Sarah Haynes*, who was delivered on the 28th of *April* last, 1746, at *Chelsea*, of a monstrous Child, and who advertis'd the seeing of it, at the *Golden Fan* in *Great Newport Street*, I have seen; and any Body else may see still, if they please: She had been frighten'd, when but nine Weeks gone with Child, by the Roaring of a Lion at the *Tower*. But I give up all these as being too partial; and I choose to publish this General Invitation and Request to all the Fair Sex, That they would be pleas'd to assist me, by conveying to me such Histories as they can answer for; taking Care that they be drawn up
in

DEDICATION.

in the most clear, concise Stile, and unexceptionably witnessed; in order particularly to convince my Antagonists. The Physicians, I am sure, will not be so incredulous. It is indeed preposterous, that those who tax us for disbelieving *supernatural* Stories, should themselves have less Faith for the *natural*. I could have alledged BOERHAAVE on my Side; but I am resolved to decline all Authorities, and refer all to the most severe and unprejudiced Examination. You may depend, Ladies, upon my making the best Use possible of your Informations, and that I shall remain, with all due Thanks,

LADIES,

Your zealous Friend,

and most obedient Servant,

Cambridge Street,
St. James's, March
the 12th, 1746-7.

JOHN HENRY MAUCLERC.

T H E



THE
P R E F A C E.



THE Controversy relating to the *Strength of Imagination in pregnant Women*, is one of those I had resolved never to meddle with: Not only because it is of no Use in Practice, but because there are so many Questions, of much greater Importance, both in Theory and Practice, which I would have to be decided first.

I should not scruple in the least, to tell you presently, for which Side of the Question I am most inclined; but I can assure you, with as much Truth, that I shall yield alike to any Demonstration for either.

I advise, nevertheless, those who stand up most resolutely for the contrary Side, to consider with the Spectator, (N^o 117.) “ That there are some
“ Opinions, in which a Man should stand neuter,
“ without engaging his Assent to one Side or the
“ other. Such a hovering Faith as this, which
“ refuses to settle upon any Determination, is ab-
“ solutely necessary in a Mind that is careful to avoid
B “ Errors

The P R E F A C E.

“ Errors and Prepossessions. When the Arguments
“ press equally on both Sides, in Matters that are
“ indifferent to us, the safest Method is to give up
“ ourselves to neither.”

But, before I speak more directly to the Purpose, I think proper to give you my Opinion concerning the Persons who deny the Effects of the Mother's Imagination; in the same Words that the Spectator gives his, concerning those, who deny the Apparition of Ghosts: “ At the same
“ time (says he) I think a Person, who is thus
“ terrified with the Imagination of Ghosts and
“ Spectres, much more reasonable, than one who,
“ contrary to the Reports of all Historians, sacred
“ and profane, antient and modern, and to the
“ Tradition of all Nations, thinks the Appearance
“ of Spirits fabulous and groundless.” (*Spectator* N^o 110.)

On the other Hand, if my Adversaries have a mind to judge of me, I would have them again, to form their Opinion from the Words of the Spectator, applied by a *Prosopopæia* to my ownself, as he speaks on the Subject of Witches: “ In
“ short, when I consider the Question, whether
“ there are such Persons in the World as those
“ we call Witches? My Mind is divided between
“ the two opposite Opinions; or rather (to speak
“ my Thoughts freely) I believe in general, that
“ there is, and has been such a Thing as Witch-
“ craft; but at the same time, can give no Credit
“ to any particular Instance of it.” (*Spect.* N^o 117.)

The Reader may therefore justly be desirous to know then, what could determine me to write on this Subject? and I shall now plainly declare, what it was that did.

The P R E F A C E.

It is a good while since I was in dispute with some Gentlemen, and chiefly Divines, on this common Topick. They all were against me, and alledged the famous Treatise of Dr. BLONDEL. I need not relate Particulars ; it will be sufficient to say, that the least understanding among them in *Physical* Matters, said to me, as we went home together, *What, won't you give up?* As if any one's Authority or Prepossession, for Dr. *Blondel*, ought to convince me!

I could not then come at Dr. *Blondel's* original Work ; although one of those Gentlemen had offered to lend it me. He could only procure me the *Extract*, which is given of it in the Literary Journal of the *Hague*. I saw enough there, to admire the learned Doctor's Parts, but could not see any thing to convince me.

At length, I had the Satisfaction, when I least expected it, to peruse the *Dissertation on the Power of the MOTHER'S IMAGINATION ; in answer to Dr. Turner's Book, &c.* I must confess the Journalists have done Justice to the Merit of Dr. *Blondel* ; but they have not displayed his Arguments in a sufficient Light to judge of them. I should never have found their Weakness, if I had not read the Book itself.

I flatter myself, that there is no room to upbraid me for attacking an Author, who can no more defend himself ; since I attack not his Person, but his *Arguments* ; which, to be sure, must be canvassed by all those who will meddle with the same Subject of Debate. If, by chance, I should take him up a little ; it shall be only, where I think he has forgot himself, with regard to Dr. *Turner*, whom I knew no more than him : And herein I shall only seek to do Justice on both Sides ; which

The P R E F A C E.

is an Obligation that may make amends for the other Fault, in case any such Accusation should arise against me.

I design to follow Dr. *Blondel*, Step by Step, in order to save myself the Trouble of a new Composition ; and I shall pick only those Places which concern the main Point. All that lies upon me, is, to shew, that he has not proved his *Negative*. I should proceed afterwards to prove the *Affirmative* ; but I have given my Reasons for not doing it * : Whereby it will appear, after all, that I shall stick to my former Resolution of not meddling with the Question itself.

You will not therefore be surprized, that I should endeavour to make good my own Plea, nor find amiss, that I should undertake to overthrow the Batteries of that mighty Champion, who attacks the Ladies, without allowing them the Liberty of defending themselves. And, whether you consider it as a Cause between the Physician and the Divine, for the Honour of their Professions ; or else between the Ladies and Dr. *Blondel* ; I hope it will be thought very well worth Attention.

Quod medicorum est, promittunt medici, tractant fabrilia fabri.

* See my Address to the Ladies.



O N

Dr. B L O N D E L's

ADVERTISEMENT and PREFACE.

AS Dr. *Blondel* declares in his *Advertisement*, that he has not published his Name out of *Ostentation*, nor entered this Field out of Affectation for *Singularity*; so I protest, I do not enter the List with him out of *vain Glory*, nor engage in this Quarrel out of blind *Zeal* for *popular Errors*.

In his *Preface* he affirms, that *no Body* can ever pretend to answer his Reasons directly; and he expects, to be opposed with *Vehemence*, and as much *Zeal*, as if he was going to overthrow the usual Course of Nature. I can assure, nevertheless, the Reader, that I do pretend to answer his Reasons and Arguments DIRECTLY: And besides, far from opposing him with *Zeal* and *Animosity*, I shall do it with all the *Calmness* and *Moderation*, that I should bring to Mathematical Truths; and with the

the sole Intent of seeking the TRUTH ; as if was the most indifferent Thing to me, and *without apprehending* any dismal Effects from his Attempt.

He goes on immediately thus : “ It will be said “ (and that’s all that can be said) that to determine “ how Imagination is able to mark the *Fætus*, “ very difficult, or impossible, but that a long “ Experience of many Ages is a sufficient Proof “ that it is actually done, &c.” He returns an Answer to this, but it is not a *direct* one. For, *say*, that *the Doctrine of Imagination has gone through several Revolutions*, is nothing to the Purpose. He might have cut short to that, by defining exactly which of those Opinions he was going to oppose. And, as for what he observes next, concerning the shameful Abuse of the Word EXPERIENCE, it is but too true, though nothing to the Purpose *neither* ; for in this Affair we mean certainly the Experience of PHILOSOPHERS. I will therefore answer his Proposition *more directly*, by the noble Words of Cicero, which the Doctor quotes soon after, but translates ill in the Beginning, and must be thus corrected. * *My Opinion is, says Cicero, that we ought not to enquire so much into the Cause of those Things, as into the Events, or Facts, &c. I am satisfied to know, what is done, though I cannot tell, by what Means it is performed.* So I say in this Case. Let us first be sure of the Fact ; and then we will enquire into the Reason. This is a universal RULE, especially in PHYSICAL Matters. For how many Things are there, which may be very certain, though we know not the Reason, or Manner, how they came to pass ?

* *Quarum quidem rerum eventa magis arbitror, quam causas quæri oportere, &c. Hoc sum contentus, quod etiam quomodo quidque fiat, ignorem, quid fiat intelligo. Divin.*

All that he alledges here, concerning the De-
 eits, and Errors of Men, in other Things, is quite
 superfluous. Nor does it follow, because we lie
 under a World of Imposition, relating to the Af-
 fairs in hand, that all the Stories we hear of it, are
 fabulous, or false.

As to what he just mentions of *Dreams, Witches,*
 and *Wizards*, I refer the Reader to the Judgment
 of the Spectator, quoted before-hand in my Pre-
 face.

I grant, that *Post hoc, ergò propter hoc*, is a
 vulgar Sophism: But I shall make it my Business
 to shew, that *Post hoc, ergò propter hoc*, is sound
 Logic in the Business before us.

The Doctor says, *His Opinion is harmless, good-
 natured and useful, in making easy the Minds of
 several Persons.* I do also believe, that his Inten-
 tion was very good; and I think, it is to be wish-
 ed, we could perswade the greatest Part, that there
 is nothing in the Matter.

I am so convinced of the POWER of IMAGINA-
 TION, and of the Weakness of most Minds, that
 I think, it would be good Policy, and a great
 Service, if we could draw off more, the Thoughts
 of most Women from the Belief of these Stories, the
 Presence of dangerous Impressions, and the Con-
 sideration of this Subject. I need not dwell any
 longer upon the rest of his Preface. I shall only
 remark, on the PROPOSITIONS, which stand here
 at the Head of this Treatise, that the Second among
 them, viz. That there's no *Solutio continui* without
 Force or Violence, is very true in Mechanics; but
 is a mere Sophism, when applied to the present
 Subject of Dispute.

THE
POWER
OF THE
Mother's Imagination over the Fœtus
EXAMINED.

CHAP. I.



THE Doctor defines very exactly what this *Imagination* is. He makes then presently, this Question. In what Sense can the Mother do an Injury to the *Fœtus* in *Utero*? In Answer, he says, *That whatever is detrimental to her, is directly or indirectly prejudicial to the other.* We shall see anon, whether this Proposition is not directly against his own self.

He confesses, pag. 3. That *the Child may also suffer by the Affection of the Mother's Mind.*

He acknowledges, and describes very well, the Effects of the Passions in Human Bodies; he assigns a Mechanical Cause for them, *viz. The convulsive Motion of the Diaphragm, and of the Muscles of the Abdomen, which, like a strong Bar, strike upon the Viscera.* And, if such a Cause should be wanting for the Effects under our Consideration, I think we cannot better explain it, than in the Author's own Words, which immediately follow here.

Now

Now, where's the Wonder, that, such a Force pressing upon the Uterus, which is also in Convulsion, should knead the tender Child, and cause Dislocations, Fractures, Mutilations, Hernias, Ecchymoses, &c. ?

He asks, in the next place, “ Whether the “ strong Attention of the Mother's Mind to a “ determinate Object, can cause a determinate or “ a specifick Impression upon the Body of the “ Child, without any Force or Violence from a- “ broad ? ” And lastly, “ Whether in the Fit of “ Imagination, the Application of the Mother's “ Hand to any particular Place of her Body, “ though accidental, and not premeditated, can “ work sympathetically upon the like Part of the “ Body of the *Fætus*, and be of any dangerous “ Consequence ? ” This is the true State of the Question, and Point of Debate ; what we believe, but what our Author affirms to be contrary to *Experience, Reason, and Anatomy*. We shall see, whether he can prove it so. In the mean while I shall only observe, that, if ever there is *any Force or Violence from abroad*, there will be neither Wonder, nor Difficulty ; and in case of an *accidental, or unpremeditated* Application of the Hand, there would be no room for IMAGINATION.

CH A P. II.

IN this Chapter, he begins by laying down some RULES for the Certainty of Experience about the Matter in hand. I grant in general, they are good ; but they seem liable to some Equivocations, which must be removed. *v. g.* The *Second*, where he says, that this *Experience should be grounded upon the Testimony of our Senses, and not depending upon occult Qualities, Suppositions, &c.* has no Reference to Matter of Fact, but includes groundlessly the *Rationale*. The *Fourth*, That they must be in such

a Number, as to overbalance all *Counter-Observations*, is an unreasonable Condition, as I shall shew hereafter. The *Sixth*, That *the Credit of unknown Witnesses does diminish, in Proportion of the Distance of Places and Times*, is more reasonable, but fallacious. I will not spend Time in shewing this Fallacy; but observe only, that *Ditton*, in his *Treatise on the Resurrection*, has demonstrated, That, in some Cases, the Credit of Witnesses increases in Proportion to the Distance of Times.

I would therefore, supposing the other *Conditions* (which are requisite in all Testimonies) lay down only two, which I think would be sufficient. 1st. That we be sure the Mother had been affected, had seen, had been frightened, had coveted, had longed, had applied her Hands, in Consequence of the Action of the Object: And 2^d. That the Effect has ensued, agreeably to the Impression.

The remaining Part of this Chapter is taken up, in expatiating on the several Systems and Variations of the *Imaginationists*. I have already observ'd, on the Author's Preface, that all this is little to the Purpose. I own indeed, that he treats it with a great deal of Wit and Humour: But, as I have no Pretensions to contend with him for Wit; and have declared besides, that I would confine myself to the Consideration of the main Point; I shall only just touch one or two Articles in this Part.

1st. If we can but agree about the *Effect*, I believe we shall have no Dispute about the *Time*, when it is performed. Dr. *Turner* seems to determine it right; and, as to the Difficulty of accounting for the Loss of Limbs, at the End of *Gestation*, I shall put that off to another Place.

2^{dly}. The Operations which are said to be worked designedly, by the Strength of Imagination, on Persons at a vast Distance, &c. have no Relation to the Affair of the Mother's Imagination on her Child.

3^{dly}.

3dly, and *lastly*. The Production of Monsters is another Question, to be considered apart. It would be mere cavilling for me, to dwell longer on this Chapter.

C H A P. III.

H E R E the Doctor continues to examine the Proofs from EXPERIENCE. He maintains three Assertions. 1st. That *there is sometimes Imagination, and yet afterwards neither Marks, nor Deformities follow.* 2aly. That *there are Marks, &c. without any precedent Imagination.* 3dly, and *lastly*, That *there are Marks, &c. pretended to be subsequent to, and the Effect of the Mother's Imagination.* He speaks to the two first here, and reserves the last for the following Chapter.

I must own, the first Instance he brings in of *ineffectual Imagination*, is much in his Favour. A Gentlewoman who had an Aversion against Cats, was frightened by a Cat, and was brought to Bed of a fine Boy, who loved Cats.

I ask only, whether we have not as much Right to exact as great a Number of such Instances for his Side, as he would have us produce for ours? He says, *he could give a long Catalogue* of such. That is, what we can no more question with him now. But I am sorry, the latter Part of his Sentence, or Boasting, intimates something that would be against him: He says, *And yet those Misfortunes did not appear, upon the Birth of the Children, to have been visibly of such ill Consequence to them, as to mark their Bodies.* They were then of *some ill Consequence*, though not to mark them. I shall therefore wait, 'till some others be produced.

The next Instance he alledges, is of MARY Queen of SCOTS, whom her Secretary, *David Rixio*, seized violently by the Wrist, to protect himself against the barbarous Attempts of his Enemies,

who had stabbed him in her Presence. Every Body knows, that King JAMES *the first*, who was afterwards born of her, could not bear the Sight of a *naked Sword*. I shall not enquire, whether that terrible Accident was the Cause of his Aversion or not. Dr. *Blondel* chuses to throw it upon the unhappy Education of that Prince. Be that as it will, I wish, the Doctor could tell me, how that *Force or Violence from abroad*, came not to have the natural *Mechanical* Effects, which one might expect from it? I think it is very strange, that the Force *pressing upon the Uterus*, did not cause Abortion, *knead the Child*, or produce some of those other lamentable Effects, which the Doctor himself (pag. 4.) said, there would be no Wonder of. He was as much bound in this Case, to account, why *Mechanicks* did nothing? as we to account, why *Imagination* did not all he desired?

Let that Example therefore, remain as it is. I could also willingly pardon him the ingenious Account he gives for that King's pacifick Dispositions; if his partial Zeal had not carried him so far out of the Way, as to call the excellent and admirable BUCHANAN *a learned Pedant*.

Our Author objects in the next Place, that there are some Marks and Deformities *without any preceding Imagination*. He relates three Instances of this, within his own Knowledge, which I shall not contest. And who does not know, that there are many irregular Conformations, Deformities, Redundancies, and anomalous Dispositions of Parts, both external and internal, to which we are well assured, the Mother's Imagination did not, nor could not, contribute?

But, on the other Hand, is there not Reason sometimes to suspect, that Women will not confess, they had been particularly affected with the Imagination, or Sight, of some Things? This is very probable

probable in the Instance quoted here from *Thom. Bartholine*, of a Child that was born with an Excrescence, like the *Head-cloaths* of *Danish Women*: At least it is an Exception as reasonable against this antient and remote Witness, as any that can be laid against the like, in favour of the Imaginationists.

Do we not know, how shy the Women are always in confessing their Longings? They never will own upon the Spot, that they longed for such a Thing. It must be presented before them, as if we knew nothing of their Desire. And, if they are so unwilling to confess their Longings and Affections, before the Effect, why may not they sometimes be as backward to confess them afterwards? Certainly some Women are such unaccountable Creatures, that no more Stress can be laid on their Denials, than their Affirmations.

*Incerta hæc si tu postules
Ratione certa facere, nihilò plus agas,
Quàm si des operam, ut cum ratione insanias.*

I shall, in some fitter Place, give a Reason why Imagination does not always act? and why some uncommon Effects are produced without Imagination? Though at the same time, I cannot tell, whether the Absurdity of these Objections does not appear more evidently, by observing, that they suppose Imagination should be the Cause of *all* preternatural and extraordinary Formations, or of *nothing*? and that no other Causes could produce anomalous, or unnatural ones?

I need oppose nothing to the *Estimate*, by which our Author concludes this Chapter of *the Proportion Marks and Deformities do bear to the Number of Children*; because, on the one hand, it is bare Supposition, *gratis dictum*, and on the other, quite useless, if my foregoing Answer is good.

C H A P. IV.

ALL this Chapter is spent in representing, that *there are Marks and Deformities pretended to be subsequent to Imagination.* But this we have readily granted. *Confitentem habes reum.* What would you have more? Does it therefore follow, that *Marks and Deformities* do never really happen after a precedent Imagination? Because there are some Lies, is there therefore no Truth? I hope there is. The Doctor hopes, that, when his several *Deductions* are made, we shall not think fit to defend our Cause any longer. He is much mistaken. For I will allow him all, except the *Discount* of Dr. Turner's twelfth Chapter, of which hereafter; and shall nevertheless continue to defend my Cause.

I need not rehearse his *Deductions*. I shall only shew, what unfair Objections he raises against two or three Stories he has picked out to cavil at.

1st. *A Woman having been frighted with the Firing of a Gun, was delivered of a Child with a Wound in his Back, of the same Shape, as if it had been done with a Musquet Shot.*

How are these Wounds made, says the Doctor? I answer, This is enquiring into the *Manner*, and not objecting against the Fact itself, or the *Credibility* of the Witnesses. He starts next another Difficulty about the Time when this Wound is performed, to wit, *in the Birth*, or *in the very Instant of Fright*? And then he determines it *at the Birth*; because he imagines an Effusion of Blood would have killed the Child before. But this is as reasonable to suppose, as the Question he makes at last: *Why is it just to charge the Mother with the Misdemeanors of other People?* I have no Answer to give to such a Question.

2. The next Story is from Father MALEBRANCHE, *viz.* That of the Woman who was brought to Bed of a Child, resembling the Picture of old Saint *Pius*. Whether this was an Imposition or not, I cannot tell : But I do not see, how the Account Dr. *Blondel* would give us of it, is sufficient to invalidate the Testimony of *Malebranche*, That it was, what all Paris might have seen as well as himself. I am sure, however, the Instance he alleges afterwards of a *Jew Cheat*, does not countenance that Opinion, because it is not said, the Lad was born with the Characters that were seen on him.

3. and lastly, The third Story, is also from *F. Malebranche*. It is that of the Man who was born an Idiot, and whose Body was broken in the same Places where Malefactors are broke. I am sorry Dr. *Blondel*, and I, cannot agree here. I must own, the Relation appears to me very credible; and the Account *F. Malebranche* gives of it, very natural and intelligible.

I shall say nothing to perswade others into my Opinion of this Story. If they cannot judge by themselves, all my Discourse would be in vain. Let them read *Malebranche*. I will only shew the Weakness of Dr. *Blondel*'s Objections.

1. He objects, that *F. Malebranche* does not say expressly, he had examined that Man. But may not that Omission be a mere Oversight, or Negligence ? And is it likely, he should not have had that Curiosity once, during the Space of twenty years, that the Man was to be seen ?

2. He has the Boldness to invalidate the QUEEN'S Testimony. But while so many Persons had seen the Man, who, more fit to be named by *Malebranche*, than a Person of her Distinction and Authority ? Is it to be supposed, that she would have condescended, or desired to see the Man, if

the Fact had not been notorious? And could she not judge of broken Arms and Legs, as well as others, since she was pleased to touch them? I am ashamed, that Dr. *Blondel* should say, a *Bone-setter's* Testimony had been of greater weight in this Case.

3. He pretends, that *F. Malebranche* asserts, there was no *Callus* in these Fractures; and, he objects, they could not have continued twenty years without a *Callus*. But I see nothing of that in *Malebranche*, nor any Reason to suppose a *Callus*.

4. He supposes, the Child should have been marked with a Wound upon his Breast, because Criminals always receive a strong Blow there. But is that certain? And, suppose it was, would the Consequence be necessary? And, is the Objection reasonable?

5^{thly} and lastly. The last Objection is a sad Shift. He won't pretend to deny absolutely the *Fact*; but he affirms, it is utterly impossible, that Fractures should remain so long without Reunion or Death. In short, he thinks, 'tis probable, the Lad brought into the World, a *Luxation of the Bones of the Carpus and Tarsus*, which might easily pass for such Fractures. But, does this Probability amount to a Proof? Or, if it does, would it not be as difficult to account for this *Phænomenon* as the other? Who does not see, all this is mere Presumption? I presume also, that the Instances of soft Bones, in morbid Cases (by which our Author finishes this Chapter) are so little to the Purpose, that I may safely pass over their Consideration.

C H A P. V.

Monstrum horrendum, informe, ingens, cui lumen ademptum!

WE are now come to the great *Bone of Contention* between the two Authors, the XII. Chap. of the first Part of Dr. *Turner's* Treatise, *De Morbis Cutaneis*.

Dr. *Blondel* declares, he had not that Chapter in view, when he wrote his *first* * Dissertation on *The Strength of Imagination in pregnant Women*, We must take his Word for that. But it is plain, he looks on this Chapter, as the most valuable Collection, or most compleat Summary of what can be said on this Side of the Question; since he says here, 'tis enough to examine this only, to be convinced of the *Absurdity* of the several Reports, &c.

I should be sorry, that the whole Cause lay at stake on this; neither do I take it on that Footing. Whenever I write *à priori* on this Subject, I shall take care my Vouchers be good; but I am not obliged to answer for Dr. *Turner's*.

I am ready to allow, that Dr. *Blondel* was the greater Philosopher, and a more learned Critick; but he must not have the Advantage for that, nor must we suffer his Adversary to be oppress'd.

In examining these Cases, I design to observe the strictest Impartiality: I shall defend all those I can, against the unjust Reproaches of Dr. *Blondel*; but, as for those few, which you will find, that I pass by without mentioning, you may suppose, that I give them up, either to his Censure, or Mirth.

* This first Dissertation was occasioned by that notorious Cheat at *Godalmin*, of a Woman that pretended to bring forth Rabbits.

I have not seen this Book, no more than the Author of the *British Oracle* (N^o I.) whence I learnt this Particular.

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Whenever

Whenever the Doctor banters upon just Grounds, I shall not oppose him, but rather join in his Sport; and I must own, the Reader has often here Occasion of diverting himself. He accuses Dr. *Turner* of falling into *Contradictions*; but we shall see, that he is fallen into the same, and perhaps more such, himself. * In short, although we should grant, what he pretends, that *these Cases are some of them fictitious, or frivolous, and all of them insufficient*; I hope, it will appear, we need not, nor ought not, to be cast in our Suit for that.

I. It is very unfair in Dr. *Blondel* to wave the Authority of a plain Text, without saying any thing against it. *The Desire, saith Hippocrates, of pregnant Women, is able to mark the tender Infant with the Thing desired.* Nothing more positive. It's true, here is no mention made of *Imagination*; but the Thing itself is very well expressed. And if HIPPOCRATES is not for us, the Doctor has gone the wrong Way to work. He ought to have shewn us, that this Passage is not genuine; as the other certainly is not, which he alledges against him. HIPPOCRATES could never advise such cruel Experiments, as is there hinted. But, since our Author will insist on *spurious Works*, the next Quotation from the same Place, might receive a favourable Interpretation, both with the Text above, and for the current Opinion of Imagination. v. g. “ If a
 “ pregnant Woman longs for *Coals, or Earth, and*
 “ *does eat them, (i. e. such unnatural Food)* the
 “ Child will be marked. But, if she longs for
 “ any *natural and wholesome Victuals*, the Child will
 “ be marked, *if her Longing is baulked.*” This is very rational; for there must be something *extraordinary*, some Way or other, to work the Effect, and thus all is reconciled. But Dr. *Blondel* has

* See the Collection of them at the End of this Dispute.
 shewn

shewn himself a bad Critick, all along here, by not distinguishing between the *genuine* and *spurious* Works of that great Man.

II. We shall have Occasion hereafter, to consider the Testimony of the Antients. I shall only say here a Word in Behalf of Dr. *Turner*. The Advice of *Hesiod* to his Brother, does not indeed relate directly to the Imagination of Mothers; but to the Cause of those Resemblances, which we observe very commonly between near Relations. To be sure, there must be something within us, that contributes towards it: But, if we consider how little in Reality! What more fit to think on, than *Imagination*? That this was the Notion of the Antients, I could prove from the Authority of *Plutarch*; who advises (somewhere) Men not to go about the Work of Generation in a Fit of Anger, or Drunkenness, lest the like Dispositions should be transmitted to the Offspring.

I won't justify Dr. *Turner*, if he has *blindly copied* the Words annexed to *Hesiod*: But it is plain, they are a natural Comment on the Text; and it is therefore no matter to us, whether he understood the Original, or not.

I should have some fine Things to say here, on the Moral Sense of *Hesiod's* Precepts, and their Conformity with some of *Moses*, in order to clear them from imputed *Superstition*; but I leave that Task to the Divines, who are Dr. *Blondel's* Friends.

III. There is nothing incredible in the *Stratagem* of *Dionysius*; and why should we not believe that St. *Austin* has preserved us this Piece of History, as soon as any other? *Soranus* tells us, that *Dionysius the Tyrant* would always have a beautiful Picture set up before his Wife in the Bed-Chamber; that by Strength of Fancy she might conceive that Likeness. Whether this Story be true, or not, it is certain,

the Notion concerning the Effect of contemplating Pictures, is deeply rooted in the Minds of Women. But, what I most find fault with here, is, that we are not informed, whether *Dionysius* succeeded in his Stratagem.

However, I am sure, that that is a more reasonable Objection, than to apprehend with Dr. *Blondel*, that he went hereby the shortest way to be made a Cuckold. I am surpris'd, the Doctor, who is so quick-sighted, did not lay hold on so material an Objection, instead of sporting so much with the Oddness of the Fancy.

IV. The Story of the Girl, who was born so like the Picture of St. *John the Baptist*, is very parallel to the Story, related by *Malebranche*, (see pag. 12.) of the Child resembling the Picture of old St. *Pius*. All I can say, to countenance these Stories concerning Pictures, is, that I have seen some Ladies, who practis'd this Stratagem; and several Children, who were like the Pictures of their dead Relations. I might add, for further Confirmation, if I did not fear the Suspicion of Vanity, that I knew one or two Ladies, when I was a Child, who us'd to look very eagerly on me, in order to have such a fine Boy. But I leave every one to think of this as they please.

V. You may remember the Instance, (see p. 7.) Dr. *Blondel* has alledged, of a Gentlewoman, who, tho' frighted by a Cat, was brought to Bed of a Boy that loved Cats. Here is an Instance on the other Side, from *Bartholine*, of a Woman, who, being frighted in the same manner, was delivered of a Child, that had the Head of a Cat. The Doctor nibbles at the Credulity of that learned Author, tho' he owns, we may rely on Cases, that were of his own Knowledge. I need not defend that great Man's Reputation, and Credit, any farther. I would not neither warrant the Story, which makes

a *Paroli* to the foregoing, of the Gentlewoman of *Helsenor*, who was delivered of a *great Rat*. The most I could say to support the Credibility of this, would be the Instance of a Child, who came to be born, by some such Accident, with the *Motions* of a Cat or Rat : But, as I am told, this has happened to the Mother-in-Law of the Gentleman who chiefly opposed me; I hope, he will, one Day or other, bring to light the Particulars, which I have not yet had the Opportunity to be well informed of. In the mean while, I appeal to the *Ladies*, whether BARTHOLINE ought not to be credited, who says, I WILL NOT HAVE THE UNDOUBTED VERACITY OF WOMEN CALLED IN QUESTION.

VI. The Joke on the Pope's Niece, who had a monstrous Birth, *armed, as it were, with Bear's Claws*, &c. is excellent. It would be pity to spoil it. But, since our Author proposes, on this Occasion, in a jocular Manner, whether it would not be fit to present a Petition, for a *new Regulation of Street-Signs*? I think, I may take the same Opportunity to represent, that some new Order for removing several shocking Objects out of the Streets, would certainly prevent many Accidents, and be very grateful to the *Publick*. We have now done with Pictures.

VII. The Story of the *Calf* will afford us abundance of Remarks. The Fact is this. “ A Woman, who was forced to be present at the killing of a Calf, had a Child born with his Entrails hanging out by the Navel.”

I. Dr. *Blondel* remarks first of all, that this Story comes from *Gregorius Horstius*, who had imbibed his Father *Jacobus Horstius's* Principles. But is it just to slander the Son for the Father? I confess, I did not insist on the preceding Cases related from *Horstius*, because they are too common, and because I thought the Objections raised on Account of his Credulity,

Credulity, were too justly grounded. But I think, no such Exception lies against his Son.

You will soon be told, that *Gregory Horstius* was a Man engaged in the Dispute relating to Imagination, and who *swallowed greedily* those Stories, which favoured his System. In order to dispel this Calumny, and to shew how consistent *Dr. Blondel* is with himself, I shall only warn you, that, a few Pages lower, he quotes in his own Favour, the following Words, where *Gregory Horstius* plainly judges contrary to his supposed Prejudice : *Magis ad ipsius sanguinis infectionem, quàm ad imaginationem respiciendum*. If the Son then was so credulous, like his Father, why does the Doctor appeal to him, contrary to his Opinion ?

2. It appears plainly, by the Relation, that *Gregory Horstius*, and another Physician did question the Mother : But *Dr. Blondel* seems displeased, that they have not given us the Character of this Woman, and then objects very comically at last, that *she had been entirely silent*, if the Gentlemen had made her no Questions. I ask, what we must do, to satisfy *Dr. Blondel* ?

3. I must say, in Defence of *Dr. Turner*, that the Word *extraordinary* is no improper Expression for *quodammodo* in the Text, and that there is no Necessity to suppose, the Woman was frightened at the Sight, but only much moved : Wherefore *quodammodo commota*, felt an *extraordinary* Motion, was very well said.

4. I pass by the unseasonable Joke on the Soldiers who forced this Woman to see the Calf ; but I must observe, that the Case before us is exactly parallel to one (related before, Pag. 26.) of a *Cooper's Wife*, who had been present at the Killing of a Hog, and was brought to Bed of a Child, whose *Entrails* hanged out of the Abdomen. And our Author commits the same Fault in both Places, by objecting

objecting his vain Supposition, that *there should have been a mortal Effusion of Blood* in the Womb : Which is enquiring into the *Manner*, without striking at the *Fact*. What more absurd ?

I leave the Reader now, to compare our Remarks, and to see, whether the whole Case does not fall much harder on Dr. *Blondel*, than on his Adversary Dr. *Turner* ?

VIII. It is well, I have cleared the Reputation of *Gregory Horstius* ; for here is another remarkable Story from him, of which he was an *Eye-Witness*, with the famous *Kepler* ; and yet the Doctor will not believe him ! *A Woman was brought to bed of a Child, that was born circumcised, according to the Description that was made to her of that Operation, some Time before.* I will answer the Doctor's Objections *directly*.

1. *Gregory Horstius* taxes the Mother's *Imagination* upon just Grounds, since that was the only apparent Cause of the Effect.

2. Is it natural to think, that the Woman had no Curiosity to know, what was Circumcision ? And is it reasonable, or charitable to suppose, that she did not listen *very attentively* to the Description of a Religious Ceremony, which is so seldom fully explained ? Surely then her Imagination was sufficiently set to work !

3. Is it probable, that *Horstius*, who was a Physician, did not know what is *Circumcision* ? Or is it likely, that *Kepler*, a *Mathematician*, was credulous ? I am ashamed to say more.

IX. I am willing to reject the Evidence of *Cornelius Gemma*, with Scorn and Contempt, as Dr. *Blondel* demands ; but I am so much the less inclined to approve of the Objection made against the Truth of his Report.

A Person frightened near the Time of her Labour, is delivered of a Child, who dies presently after, from a Wound in its Forehead. The

The Doctor has supposed, in some other like Cases, that there should have been a mortal *Effusion of Blood* in the Womb. Here he supposes, the Child did not bleed in the Womb; while it is said, the Mother's Fright happened just before her Labour; and then he is surpris'd, *such an Abundance of Blood* should flow when the Child is born! What would the Doctor have? Let the Events be never so agreeable to his Conceptions, he finds always Evasions!

X. The Case of a *Scold* is the first Instance produced from a most credible Author, *Fabricius Hildanus*. But the Criticism upon it is so humorous, that I had rather lose that Precedent. I shall only observe, that the Reason why Dr. *Blondel* could not meet with another such Story from *Billingsgate*, was, that the Practice of *Scolding* is too common there, to make any Impression.

XI. The best Answer I can make to the Difficulty proposed by our Author, relating to Children born *Epilepticks*, from the Mother's Fright, is, that we have no Reason to imagine, this may not be one of the Causes, because we are assured, there may be so many others of the same Misfortune.

But I would have you mind, that *Hildanus* himself is very diffident on this Occasion: *Verum nihil certi constituere conabor, videlicet an imaginatio matrum in his infantulis fuerit causa nec ne.*

Nevertheless you will see that this same Author is said, to affect in all his Letters, to furnish his Friend *Horstius* with *Ammunition* in picking up, as much as it is in his Power, any Story, true or false, he can find in his Way. Let Dr. *Blondel*, or his Friends answer this Accusation.

XII. The Case of the famous *Buchinger*, whom most People have seen at *London*, and several other Cities in *Europe*, would be very fit to countenance the Story related here of *Thom. Schwicker*, who was born

born without Arms from his Mother's Fright. But I fear, Dr. *Blondel* would not believe *Buchinger* more than *Hildanus*, and therefore I shall let him alone.

Dr. *Turner* subjoins here an Instance within his own Knowledge, of a Child born with one Hand only, from his Mother's having been frightened at the Sight of a Beggar's Stump-Arm. Dr. *Blondel* will not dispute the *Reality* of this Lameness; but he puts so many Questions to him afterwards, for the Certainty of the *Cause*, that one might fill a Volume in *Folio* with a Dozen such Cases, if they were all to be accompanied with so many Circumstances. All this is too *Personal* for me to enter into it. *Non nostrum inter vos tantas componere lites.*

I shall give here only one general Answer to the *Sophisms*, with which our Author is continually upbraiding us, and upbraids again here Dr. *Turner*.

The Sophism *Post hoc, ergo propter hoc*, is so common and deceitful, that we cannot be too much on our Guard against it. I shall not pretend to teach every one the *Art*. That would be lost Labour indeed! *Gaudeant benè nati*, may we say here: But I will endeavour to shew, that it may be sound Reasoning in the present Subject; and by what Method, or Rules, we may be most sure, it is so.

I have acknowledged, and I cannot grant more fully, than I have done, *all* those other *Causes* (besides Imagination) which our Author rehearses here again, of Deformities, Monsters, and Mutilations in Children. I propose therefore only two *Rules* to prevent our falling into Error.

1. To be sure, that there were no other *Causes* of the *Fact*.

2. To know certainly, that Imagination had not been concerned in the *Business*.

If, after this, you will contest, I cannot dispute with you.

I ask farther; Is it not more reasonable to attribute any Effect, to a *present known Cause*, than to any other that does not appear? If therefore we are assured, and convinced, that *Imagination* has been worked on, and set to work, would it not be *direct Madness*, to assign the Effect, rather, to any other *imaginary Cause*, than to that, which we know of most assuredly? And is it not *sound Reasoning*, in this Case, to say, *Post hoc, ergo propter hoc*? Q. E. D.

It would be to little Purpose, to object at last, that you do not understand how the Effect could be brought to pass. I shall shew the Vanity of that Objection in another Place.

However, I agree with our Author, that *the Poison of the current Opinion* is very pernicious, and I wish with all my Heart, we could root it out of the Minds of most People; but I believe, the most effectual Means to prevent this *Mischief*, will be to remove the *Occasions* of it, and not to deny its *Power*. It would be Madness to deny the Effects of natural Poisons; but it is Prudence, to put them out of the Way. Tho' after all, if our Author's *Hypothesis* was true, there could be *no Poison* in the *current Opinion*.

XIII. Dr. *Blondel* acquaints us, that he is come to the Place, where Dr. *Turner* ushers in his *undeniable Facts*, from an Author we have had Occasion to mention before, *Fabricius Hildanus*. In order to ward off this Blow, Dr. *Blondel* attacks that Author's Candour and Partiality: He tells us, that *Fabricius Hildanus*, “ out of Complaisance to
“ his dear Friend (*Horstius*) and to aid, assist, and
“ comfort him, in these scholastical Troubles, does
“ affect in all his Letters, to furnish him with Am-
“ munition, in picking up, as much as it is in his
“ Power,

“ Power, any Story, true or false, he can find in
 “ his Way.”

But, in order to defeat that Charge, and restore that Author's Credit, I will be satisfied to remind you, that Dr. *Blondel* himself tells you before, (p. 54.) That, in two Cases, “ Dr. *Turner* goes
 “ farther than *Hildanus*, who is not positive, but
 “ willing to leave it to his Friend *Horstius* to de-
 “ termine.” *Verum nihil certi constituere conabor, videlicet, an imaginatio Matrum in his Infantulis fuerit causa nec ne.* Strange! he should so soon forget what he has said. But he verifies the *Latin Proverb*: *Mendacem oportet esse memorem.* I shall leave the *Facts* themselves, as they are, and touch only here and there the *Remarks* as they affect the main Quarrel.

Dr. *Blondel* asks, *What is become of Imagination*, when a Woman, after a Fracture in the Skull, is brought to Bed of two Children in sound Health, and no Deformity. I answer, that *Imagination* is not affected in Accidents that befall their own Persons, but *Sensation* only; which then takes up all their Thoughts too much, to let *Imagination* work.

Here I must make you take Notice of a flagrant Accusation, and a flat Contradiction to it, in two opposite Pages.

I shall pass by the repeated Mention of the *unaccountable Partiality* of *Hildanus*. What I am going to observe, concerns *Horstius* only.

Dr. *Blondel* says (p. 61.), that *Gregory Horstius* did always swallow very greedily those Stories in favour of his beloved System. While in the very next Page fronting it (60) he tells you, that *Horstius*, whom he (*Fabr. Hildan.*) acquaints with a Case, was not of his Mind. *Magis ad ipsius sanguinis infectionem, quàm ad imaginationem respiciendum.* Poor unhappy *Horstius*, to suffer so grievously for his Father's Credulity! But, now I am about it, I had

best go on, with observing in one View, how unjustly Dr. *Blondel* lays *Prejudice* and *Partiality* to the Charge of any Writer, who speaks on our Side of the Question.

Among other Instances, you will see some, that are taken from *Fienus*, who has written *ex professo* a Treatise, *De Viribus Imaginationis*: And yet Dr. *Blondel* appeals to him for the Falsity of those Stories, without any Commendation of his Impartiality, when he quotes the Words that so notably prove it. They are as follow.

1. I don't believe the Story, says *Fienus* very roundly. *Dico me non credere, &c.* pag. 64.

2. “ *Fienus* is of Opinion, in the next Case, that
“ it was not the Effect of Imagination. *Casu & non*
“ *virtute imaginationis.* pag. 65.

3. “ The Story appears silly, and ridiculous,
“ *Parum ridiculum videtur*, says *Fienus*, of a third.
“ pag. 69.

4. “ *Casu labrum fœtui illi defuisse, non vi Ima-*
“ *ginationis*; 'tis by Chance, says *Fienus*, and not
“ by Virtue of Imagination, that the Child wanted
“ the upper Lip. pag. 74.

I confess, I had no great Inclination to read *Fienus*; but, after such Proofs of his *Diffidence* and *Impartiality*, I believe, I shall be tempted to read him, the next time he falls into my Hands. With what Face then does Dr. *Blondel* say, (p. 70); that
“ the *Imaginationists* make a great Noise, when
“ there is the least Colour to countenance their Sup-
“ position: But when Imagination is barren, or
“ when there is a notable Deformity without any
“ preceding Imagination, then out of Shame all is
“ hushed, and the Fact is gently dropt, without
“ any farther Notice? He wishes (p. 19.), that
“ *Authors were so equitable* as to imitate Dr. *Bircher-*
“ *odius's* Sincerity, and not to keep us in the Dark,
“ as they affect to do; for they make a great

“ Noise, if they can say, never so little in favour
 “ of Imagination ; but let the contrary Cases be
 “ never so many, they hold their Tongues, and
 “ and are not willing to own, that Deformities are
 “ the only Work of Nature, and the Consequences
 “ of the Laws of Motion, which God Almighty
 “ has established in this World.”

But what does he complain of, since the most considerable Authors, here produced, are of that Character ? Do not *Hildanus*, *Horstius*, *Fienus*, every one of them say, *I doubt, I don't believe, &c.* ? Not to mention again *Bircherodius* ; who should be the foremost, since his Example is proposed. If it were worth while, I should shew on the Contrary, that Dr. *Blondel* wrests, and strains, right or wrong, every History that galls him. But what need have I to do it, while he so manifestly contradicts himself ? *Turpe est doctori, cum culpa redarguit ipsum !* I can now, with ease, go through the remaining Histories.

XIV. The Story of Miss *Muscle* is very unlucky for Dr. *Turner*. And the Stories of the *Conjunction of Children* are seldom fathered on Imagination. For which Reason I give them up entirely. I will not insist more on the Story of *Parey's Frog*. Let me make only one Remark of general use. This Example must force us to trust nothing at Second-hand, but to go directly to the Principals, to the Spring, to the Original. Since *Ambr. Parey* gave no particular Description of his Frog ; but, after his Death, other People have been so officious, as to add the Picture of a Child with a Frog's Head, to the last Edition of his Works. I hope, you will not say this is a partial Remark.

XV. Here I will observe, that, if Dr. *Turner* was to be credited, the Instance he brings in, which he hath seen himself, of an *Infant born with a fleshy, or rather cartilaginous Excrescence*, was very fit to countenance

countenance the Story of Miss *Muscle*, as to the Production of the *Monster*; though not with Respect to its living so long. Give me leave to say only, after his Example, in order to countenance the Story of the *Ape* (p. 71.) that I have seen, and many other Witnesses besides, at a noted Coffee-House in Town, a Man, whose Looks and Face, were perfectly like a *Monkey's*. But I never thought to ask him, whether this *Resemblance* proceeded from his Mother's *Imagination*; because I little expected ever to have Occasion of mentioning him. Alas! I am sorry, I have been so negligent!

XVI. I left the History of the *Lizard* alone, out of the Panegyrick of *Fienus*, because I would have it to be considered apart. Here you see, that worthy Author refuses to believe the report of his *grave and trusty Friend*! He gives his Reasons for his Disbelief. And, in the preceeding Story of the *Ape*, he tells you barely, *it was supposed*, the Mother, *when big with Child, was, &c.* What Credit then is not due to those Stories he any where attests, since he is so scrupulously cautious upon every Occasion? I leave this to your serious Consideration. If Dr. *Blondel* did not positively give himself, at the End of his Treatise for the first Author who has ever writ on this Side the Question, I should have suspected *Fienus* was the Man; as I have not yet read his Book.

I wish I had Dr. *Turner's* Book by me, to see whether his Words are fairly quoted here; I suspect Dr. *Blondel* has mistook a Reasoning for a Fact. *If I see a Woman frightened*, may perhaps Dr. *Turner* have said, *and afterwards I see an Effect corresponding to the Cause*, I judge, I believe, &c. That would be good Reason, but I leave this for a Conjecture only in behalf of Dr. *Turner*.

XVII. I am concerned for Dr. *Blondel's* Sake, to read the Difficulties, and Objections he fetches, with

with so much Pains, and Winding, against a Fact, related by Dr. *Cyprianus*, of the *Wound in the Breast*! Is it not mere Cavilling, and nothing else?

XVIII. The three last Instances I readily give up. I must only take Dr. *Turner's* Part, for some Things he has advanced in the Case of the *Irish Officer*, who is supposed to have abused Mr. *Boyle's* Credulity. That Officer pretended that his Hair had changed Colour suddenly, by a Fright. This Affair has no Reference to the Effects of the Mother's Imagination on the *Fætus*, but of Imagination in general; and, in that Light, I do not see, but a good Argument might be made of it. The common Effects of *Imagination* in the *Hypochondriacs* are so surprizing, and notorious, that we have no need to be astonished at those of a Mother's. At least, our not understanding them, is no Objection against the Fact.

Do we understand better, how a Man can think himself *Glass*, an *Earthen Pot*, or a *Dead Corps*; than how a Mother's Imagination can work on her Womb? If we understand not the one, how can it be an Argument against the other, that we understand it not neither? And this, I think, is not an Argument, *à minori ad majus*; but Parity of Reason; *à simili ad simile*, or, if you had rather, *à paribus*, or *similibus*.

I will not maintain, that Mr. *Boyle* was not imposed on, in this particular Instance; but I think, there are some others parallel to it, of such good Credit, that I see nothing incredible in the thing itself. To say nothing of the Effects of the *Passions* in general, who knows not what Fear can do?

But why will not Dr. *Blondel* allow his Adversary the Liberty of reasoning, as well as himself?

Dr. *Turner* asks, why this Alteration could not happen *instantly* upon an *extraordinary* Occasion? The

The Question is not absurd. An extraordinary Cause may have an extraordinary Effect.

Dr. *Turner* tells you, by what Accident he had an excellent Opportunity of seeing *Hairs* standing on End. He reasons on the Fact, and says, *possibly*, if the Cause (a Fright) had continued longer, *the Colour* also of the Hair might have changed, as well as the *Position*. Is it not a rational Conjecture, and what harm does Dr. *Turner*, by endeavouring to account for an Effect, in the most probable Manner he can think of?

Dr. *Blondel* corrects Dr. *Turner*, for saying, that the Hairs standing on End preceeded from *the sudden Constriction of the Pores*; because he would have it to proceed from *a strong and convulsive Contraction* of the muscular Fibres of the hairy Scalp. But is it not plain, they mean the same Thing, and differ only in the Expression? A Contraction of the Fibres, and a Constriction of the Pores are much the same; and who does not see this was *convulsive*? What a Bustle about nothing!

To conclude this Examination of Dr. *Turner's* *twelfth* Chapter; I submit, in my turn, to impartial Judges, what *Value* is to be put on Dr. *Blondel's* Objections.

C H A P. VI.

THE short Hint we have in Scripture concerning this Matter, is, what I urged against the Divines. One of them (and I believe the most learned) seem'd not to have read Dr. *Blondel's* Comment on that Passage; so that he was struck dumb; and the rest of the Company applauded me, for having defeated him with his own Weapons. I can assure you, I am not in the least proud of this Victory. For, as I proposed that Argument in the vulgar Sense, so I am sensible, I may have been mistaken.

mistaken. But I was reduced to the last Extremity : and publish that Particular, only because I think it may stand me the stead of an Apology, for attempting to vie with Dr. *Blondel* in the Interpretation of Scripture. Neither was this Introduction quite unnecessary to what I am going to say.

Dr. *Blondel* excuses himself very handsomly, for meddling with a Business out of his Province. I shall add only further, in my own Defence, that I attack him as *a Physician against a Physician* ; submitting the Decision to whom it may belong. I must confess besides, to his Praise, that I am not so well qualified for the Attempt, as he was ; since I cannot insist on the original Text. But, however I have a Right to plead, according to the best of my Knowledge, and that is all I shall pretend to. *Jacob's* Policy in placing the Rods of a certain Colour before the Cattle, is the Argument to be considered.

Gen. xxx. 38, 39. “ And he set the Rods, which
 “ he had pilled, before the Flocks in the Gutters
 “ in the Water-troughs, when the Flocks came to
 “ drink, that they should conceive, when they
 “ came to drink.

“ And the Flocks conceived before the Rods,
 “ and brought forth Cattle ring-straked, speckled,
 “ and spotted.”

Nothing more plain, than the common Sense of these Words, and the Design of *Jacob*. One would think it should not be possible to interpret them differently ! But what cannot be done to serve a Purpose ?

1. Dr. *Blondel* says, we have no Books to inform us of the current Opinion of that time, in order to know whether *Jacob* used this Artifice, with the Motive we think he did.

Ans. What then ? Suppose *Jacob* was the first Man, who put this in practice ; is it not likely, he had it from Divine Revelation ? And so, most probably,

bably, this has given rise to the current Opinion since. What would it signify therefore to know more?

To say, with Dr. *Blondel*, that the Rods were of *Jacob's own Invention, without any Encouragement from above*, is contrary to Appearance, and supported by no Authority. Far from that, this is one of those Inventions, which could not be Man's, but God's ; * as should be acknowledged by a little Consideration.

2. That *an extraordinary Providence did also interpose* on that Occasion, is most certain : But thence we have no Reason to infer, that this Divine Advice was not grounded on an *ordinary* Law of Nature, which had not been discovered, nor revealed before.

3. The Perplexities of Style, which our Author takes notice of, in the common Translation, are very insignificant, and might easily be accounted for by the Art of Criticism ; if even common Sense was not sufficient to extricate them. Who is there can imagine, that *Drinking* was the Cause of Conception ? or that the Ewes did conceive, before the Rams had leaped upon them ?

4. The nice Scrutiny of the *Hebrew* Word is too quaint for the Occasion. Who doubts, but the Ewes *rutted* before they were covered, and conceived ? Do we want *Hebrew* to know that ?

5. The Doctor's own Translation is as bad as the common : *The Flocks grew hot by the Rods*. Who would not think, that the Rods made the Flocks to grow hot ?

6. *Jacob's* Dream was nothing but a Revelation, or Vision of the Accomplishment of God's Promise ; and there is no such extraordinary *Emphasis*, nor mighty Strefs to be laid on the Declaration, that *all the Rams which leaped upon the Cattle, were*

* Quippe etiam in repertis, aliâs invenit casus, aliâs (ut verè dixerim) DEUS. *Plin.* Lib. 25. c. 2.

ring-straked. This does not contradict the Usefulness of the pilled Rods. *Jacob* knew very well before, that the Colour of the Lambs depended on the Colour of the leaping Rams ; but he did not know that the pilled Rods could promote the same Effect ; wherefore the Representation of the Ring-straked Rams to him, denoted only more certainly the Accomplishment. And, as *Dr. Blondel* observes very right, *we have the History here of seven Years in a few Words*, the Whole may be reconciled much in this manner : *The Increase of Jacob's Stock was brought about by Degrees*, as the Doctor says again ; at first, for want of speckled Rams, the pilled Rods were used to supply that Defect : Afterwards, when that End was answered, and some coloured Lambs were produced by Degrees, the speckled Cattle abounded more and more ; 'till ALL came to be Ring-straked. This is a very natural Account without any Difficulty.

7. The Doctor, notwithstanding his Interpretation, is very much puzzled to find out some Use for the pilled Rods ; which makes him say, that they *were very proper to familiarise them with the speckled Colour.* But does he not really joke ? as if the *spotted*, or *plain*, were not equally welcome and familiar to the poor Creatures ? After all, he is forced to say much the same Thing with us. For he owns, that the Ewes, *being used to drink in Sight of the Rods, were eagerly moved at the Appearance of an Object of the same Colour.* I agree, they were *eagerly moved*, that is, their Fancy was struck ; but I cannot allow the Consequence, that therefore they were *prompted to run towards the speckled Rams, rather than to the others.* For, as I have just said, the *speckled*, or the *white*, were very indifferent to them. Besides, it is contrary to the Modesty of those innocent Creatures, to suppose, that they ran towards the Rams : But I own, I am not yet enough

acquainted with their Natural History, to be very positive, as to that Point.

Another Use the Doctor would assign to these Rods, is, an *astringent* Quality to strengthen the Womb, and *prevent the Ewes from casting their young*. But he contradicts this Use, by supposing, that, when the Cattle were *languid*, (or weak) *Jacob did not put the Rods into the Waters*: That is, just when it was most necessary for them. The strong ones, I presume, could not want that Medicine.

9. Our Author starts a Difficulty, which is against himself, and lies at his own Door: *Whence came these speckled Rams, were not all those of that Colour in the Custody of Laban's Sons?*

The Difficulty is indeed unanswerable in the Doctor's System, and is removed only by ours. For, if the speckled Rams that were wanting, did not all come from *Laban's* Flock, they must come from the Breed of those Ewes, which had received the Impression of the pilled Rods. Neither does this Objection *seem to give the Lie* to the Angel; because his Declaration was prophetical, and in a Dream; not of Matter of Fact, but of Things to come: *See all the Rams which leap are speckled!* And the Fact is certain, that *Jacob* was not provided with speckled Rams enough; because otherwise he would have had no need for the pilled Rods. The Doctor objects against us, that the Angel does not say, *The Lambs which are to be brought forth*; but the Rams *which leap*: But he does not consider, that this is the true Prophetical Style, to use the *present* Tense for the *future*.

The fact may be thus easily accounted for. By the Treaty of Partition all the *speckled*, or *ring-straked* were to be *Jacob's*. But the Sons of *Laban* had cheated *Jacob*. And this, probably, might be the Reason, why God indicated to him a new Means,

Means, unknown before, to compass his End, and to confer the promised Blessing upon him.

Again : If *all the Rams* which leaped then, were *speckled*, as the Doctor insists on, the Angel told *Jacob* nothing, but what he knew before, or could see with his own Eyes, and did not want to be told in a Dream. But, as the Angel spoke in a Vision, prophetically, there was no Lie on his Part ; neither did he *equivocate*, or invite the Patriarch to gaze upon an *Ens rationis* ; since it was a Thing to come to pass. In a Word, take it which way you will, the Doctor is under a sad *Dilemma*.

According to the first Supposition, *that all were speckled*, there was no Revelation, and the Vision was to no Purpose : According to the second, *that the Angel's Speech was prophetic*, the Revelation was real, and the Vision comfortable. Let the Doctor now shift for himself ; I will not chuse for him.

I cannot tell, whether Dr. *Blondel's* Friends will laugh at my Interpretation ; but, if they should, I can assure them, they are heartily welcome ; and I shall bid them, as Dr. *Blondel* did his Opponents, *Laugh again. Ride si sapias*. I am much of his Humour ; and I believe we should agree very well, if he was alive. *Our Books might quarrel*, as he says to Dr. *Turner*, *but the Authors would be Friends*.

He makes a fair Proposal at last, which is truly philosophical, and serious : He bids Dr. *Turner* try the Experiment himself, and see, whether by any Artifice whatsoever, he can get a Breed of Cattle, coloured according to his Expectation ; * and he promises *to own himself in the Wrong*, if the Success answers. I accept the Challenge upon the same Terms. I promise to try the Experiment on the

* N. B. Dr. *Blondel* would be taken at his Word, if he was alive. See my Address to the Ladies.

first Opportunity ; and, if it does not succeed, *I am ready to own Dr. Blondel in the Right.*

10. Will you not be surpris'd now, if I should, in my turn, offer to your Consideration, two great Difficulties, which the Doctor has not been aware of, or he would have taken particular Notice of them ? The first of them would have been to his own Advantage.

The 1st. He might have objected, that Brute Beasts have no Imagination ; that the Impression of outward Objects on them is purely *mechanical* ; and consequently, that the pilled Rods could not have the Effect on the Cattle that we imagine. This would have struck at the Root at once, and had been better than to elude the Force of a plain Text by his forced Interpretation. You may say perhaps, this was only a romantick Conceit of the *French* Philosopher, of no Weight against Scripture. But it was, what he and his Followers have supported by Scripture : *The Soul of the Beast is in its Blood.* He might then have opposed Scripture to Scripture, or rather reconciled Scripture, if he pleased. Which do you now chuse ? Confute *Descartes* by the History of the pilled Rods ? Or destroy the History of the pilled Rods by the Philosophy of *Descartes* ? What room for Dispute, if I was in the Humour of it ! But I am too much engaged against my Inclination in the present Dispute, to run into unnecessary Digressions. What excellent Argument in the Doctor's Hands, if he had handled it ! But we must suppose he was no *Cartesian*, and would not call in to his Assistance such Arts : He would not betray his Conscience to defend his Cause !

2. The next *Difficulty* is against that probable Maxim, that the Colour of the leaping Rams was the *Causa proxima*, or efficient Cause of the Colour of the Lambs.

That

That *it was natural for the Breed to partake of the Colour of the Males*, is what the Doctor could affirm very rationally: But he had no Authority to assure soon after, *that the Angel told Jacob*, that the Increase of his Cattle did depend on the speckled Rams covering the Ewes. This Observation is not so certain as he imagines; neither is it easy to be reconciled with the Testimony of the Antients. *Virgil* has no Regard to the Colour of the Wool, but orders you only, to keep off from the Cattle, every Ram, that has any Blackness under the Tongue (although the Ram should be *white* himself) least that should communicate blackish Spots to the Wool of the Breed.

*Illum autem, quamvis aries sit candidus ipse,
Nigra subest udo tantum cui lingua palato,
Rejice, ne maculis infuscet vellera pullis
Nascentum.*

GEORG. III. 387.

And *Pliny* informs us more directly, That the chief Part to be regarded in a Ram, is *the Mouth*: Because the Fleece of the Lambs is used to correspond in Colour with the different Colours of the Veins underneath his Tongue. *Arietum maxime spectantur Ora: quia cujus coloris sub lingua habuere venas, ejus & lanicium est in fœtu, variumque, si plures fuere.* Lib. viii. 47.

What shall we say to this? What Reference is there between the Tongue and the Fleece? How comes Nature to act so unaccountably, and so irregularly? Should not her Marks fall in the right Place? Or, if any thing transports them, what else can it be, but IMAGINATION? The Doctor is wont to rejoice, and banter beyond Measure, whenever Imagination does not hit right; * if a Mark, a Spot,

* Thus, pag. 60. *Why is the Child run through the Head, and not through the Abdomen or Thorax?*

And again, pag. 76. *Does this seem to quadrate or tally with the Mother's Fancy?*

a Wound,

a Wound, does not answer exactly, and follow from Place to Place, and correspond with the *Prototype*. But what would he have said to Nature? How comes her Orders are not followed? And how would he have adjusted his System with this *Phænomenon*?

But to be serious: Here is room for several curious Questions. It would be worth inquiring of the Shepherds, how the Sheep perform their Courtship? *v. g.*

1. Whether they accost one another, to mouth, or bill as Birds do?

2. Whether the Ram, on his Approach, does not bleat, in a particular Manner; and, opening his Mouth, shew his Tongue?

3. Whether the Ewe does not wait for this Signal? Whether she does not look attentively at it? And whether, struck at the strange Sight, her teeming Imagination does not convey the Likeness of those Spots to the Fleece of her Young?

4. Or might not this Blackness of the Tongue be a Disease? *v. g.* Swoln Veins? A vicious affection of the *Raninae*, &c.?

5. In this Case, whether it would not be still more difficult to account in Dr. *Blondel's* System, than in the System of Imagination, why the same Part is not affected in the Offspring?

6. If it be not a Disease, what peculiar Appearance, or Disposition is it?

7thly, and lastly, It would be necessary to know, whether our Sheep ever vary much in Colour; and whether the Colour of the Wool is propagated to the Breed, from the Male, and Female Parents, indifferently?

There are few constant Observations of the Antients, but we find some Traces of them among Country-people. And there are so many Instances, as well of the Likeness of Style, as of the Agree-
ment

ment of Things, betwixt the Sacred and Prophan Records of Antiquity, that I cannot help thinking, it may be possible, to find out among the rest, some Traces of *Jacob's* Artifice; though *Dr. Blondel* assures so positively, *That we have no Books to inform us of the current Opinion of his Time.* If he had considered what Regard was paid to Nurses in those Days! and what particular Mention is made of them by *Moses* and *Homer*! he might probably have suggested, that *Leah's* and *Rachel's* Nurses, or Hand-maids had put that Stratagem into *Jacob's* Head. Be that as it will, the Reason why it is no more put in Practice at present, I believe is, that we seek only for *white* Wool. And this I take from *VIRGIL*, who advises the Choice of white Flocks:

Continuoque greges villis lege mollibus albos.

Whether our Manufacturers can do nothing with the other Kinds, is another Thing to be inquired into? But I am so destitute of Books, and of all other Means of Information, at present, that I must leave the Prosecution of these Inquiries to some more favourable Opportunity. In the mean while I hope, however, I have said enough to vindicate the Argument taken from Scripture, and to overthrow *Dr. Blondel's* wrong Constructions of it.

At the End of this Chapter is a CONCLUSION, relating to EXPERIENCE, which I cannot pass by without some Reflections.

The Author recapitulates, for Perspicuity Sake, the several Propositions he has hitherto maintained; but I desire the Reader to recapitulate also my Answers to them, and not to draw his Conclusions too hastily.

1. He desires the Readers to remember, that the *Imaginationists* never had any settled Principles, &c. But I have observed in his Preface, what a trifling

Objection that is ; and I have declared afterwards, that I would not trouble my Head with what others have thought, but stick close to the Subject in dispute between us ; which, I think, is plainly stated, and fixt enough.


2. He repeats, that *Imagination is often barren*. I have promised to answer that Objection : But it will be necessary for that Purpose, to examine the Nature and Actions of Imagination, in an abstracted View, which I must defer for some other Time. I shall only say, that it could not be always fruitful and active, unless it was Omnipotent ; and besides, to solve this Difficulty, we need only consider the different Strengths, Capacities, and Weaknesses of Imagination. Which, I fear, would require a longer Detail than would suit the present Occasion.

3. He recollects, that several Marks, &c. happen without any previous Imagination, and consequently that they must proceed from another Cause. I have agreed to that, and I answer further, what does that signify, if we can but prove, that Imagination is the Cause of some ?

4. I have shown, that our Author is too partial, too ludicrous, or too severe, in the Judgment he gives on the Testimonies produced by Dr. *Turner* ; and I hope the Reader will be so equitable as not to determine a Matter of such Consequence in his Favour, unless he had given a Demonstration that no true Testimony could be produced.

5. Let the Odds against Imagination be never so great, I little care ; since our Business is to inquire only into the Certainty of the Facts, and not to balance their Numbers. And I readily allow, the False may be more numerous than the True.

C H A P. VII.

 UR Author appeals next to REASON ; but I cannot tell, whether any Thing can be more unreasonable ?

unreasonable? Because Reason claims no Jurisdiction in this Affair, and can bring no Action against Matters of Fact.

But, since he will appeal to that Tribunal, I would fain know, whether it is not more reasonable to believe, there may be some Truth in a Fact, grounded on so many Reports, than that there is none at all? To say the Truth, REASON is neither for it nor against it. It will be Reason to believe it, if it is; and it will be Reason to believe it not, if it is not. However, I shall follow his Reasoning as close as I can; and I believe, I need not spend so many Words in refuting, as he has done in endeavouring to prove.

1. He tells us, he will shew, both by Reason and Anatomy, that Children *cannot* be marked by Virtue of the Mother's Fancy; *i. e. That it is not possible.* But does he know all that is *possible*? And are there not many *true Facts*, which appear impossible, both to Reason and Anatomy? If he could shew, that it was *contradictory* in itself, either by Reason or Anatomy, he might be in the Right; but otherwise he must wait, 'till he knows exactly the Bounds of *Possible* and *Impossible*.

2. He begins by enumerating several Functions in Animal Œconomy, that are not under the Power of the Will; *That a Woman cannot conceive, or prevent Conception, at Pleasure; that her Child grows, whether she wills, or wills not, &c.* Which is all one as to argue, because every Thing is not in our Power, that nothing is. Besides it is arguing upon Supposition, and upon *Petitio principii*. The Effects of Imagination are not voluntary, they are as necessary as those which proceed from other natural Functions. Imagination and the Will are two different Faculties, and their Provinces entirely distinct. And it is as reasonable to say, a Thing is not done by Imagination, because it is not done by the Will; as to

say, we cannot will, because we cannot understand. If Resemblance of Features is under the Influence of Imagination, it is begging the Question, to say, That it is out of the Mother's Power to give it. In short, it is quite absurd to say, that the Mother's Imagination cannot affect, nor hurt the Child, because she cannot *make* it.

3. The Effects of Imagination in *Hypochondriacs* are no less surprizing and unaccountable, than those of the Mother on the *Fætus*; but it would be as reasonable to deny the one, as the other. An *Hypochondriac* can believe himself Wax, Glass, &c. but he cannot alter the least solid Part of his Body. And therefore, since we do not deny the Former, because he cannot do the Latter; is it no more absurd, to believe, that the Mother may have Power to disfigure the Body of her Child, tho' she has none to alter or transform her own. We are sure, the constituent Parts of the Mother are unchangeable; but how liable the Child's Body may be to receive Impressions, is doubtful: We can therefore draw no Consequences from the one to the other; but, if any may be drawn, is it not likely, the Mother has a greater Influence upon her Child, that is tender, than upon her Body which is firm and strong?

4. *That a determinate Thought of the Mother can produce a determinate Effect on the Fætus*, is an Opinion that our Author does not fairly state. The Effects of Imagination over the Child are necessary; but the Direction of them is under the Influence of the Will. The common Opinion is not, that the Mother can produce any determinate Effect; but that she can *divert* it, by her Will, upon Occasion. And there is no Inconsistence, that a necessary Action of the Imagination should be determined by a voluntary Act of the Will.

5. The Passions (he acknowledges) have sometimes violent Effects upon the Body; but who has ever

ever heard, that they can bring to pass any determined Disorder, or real mechanical Effect upon it? Thus he proceeds in the same Way of Reasoning. But the same Answer will serve for all, *viz.* If a Mother has a greater Influence over the Body of the Child, than upon her own, all her Actions, Passions, or Operations of the Mind, must have a greater proportionable Effect. To say, that the Fear of a Wound, or of a Distemper, cannot give it, is all idle Talk; it is arguing upon a wrong Bottom; it is inferring a Conclusion that has no Connection nor Dependence on the *Premisses*: In a Word, it is concluding, that Imagination has no Power, in some Circumstances, under certain Restrictions, because it has not an absolute Power over all the natural Functions.

6. Fancy does not cause the Distemper, says FIENUS, but the Distemper gives Occasion to Fancy. How often must we see Dr. *Blondel* abusing that excellent Author! Here he is accounting for the strange Imaginations of *Hypochondriacs*, which is quite a different Subject. But, that you may not be deceived by this Sophistry, let me only observe, that, as it is impossible to account for the Disorders of the *Hypochondriacs*, without understanding the Natures of the Soul and Body, and the reciprocal Conditions of their Union, and Dependence one on the other; so it is impossible to account for the Disorders of Pregnancy, without understanding the Nature of that State, and knowing the Conditions of that particular Union and Dependence. But, if a Comparison may be allowed of, between Subjects so vastly different, why should not Imagination sometimes have as great an Effect on Bodies, as the Body on Imagination? Or is it more incredible, that a Disturbance in Imagination should produce a real Alteration in a Body; than, that a Disorder in the Body should produce a real Disturbance in Imagination?

tion ? That Imagination should do something that *exists* ; than, that it should make us believe, *what is not* ?

7. It does not seem consistent, says the Doctor, that contrary Passions in the Mother should produce the same Effect upon the *Fætus* ; v. g. That both Desire and Aversion should imprint the same Mark. To this I answer, that contradictory, or contrary Effects of Passions, and Vices, is no uncommon Thing : Covetousness is sometimes profuse ; Prodigality is sometimes tenacious ; Fearfulness is sometimes bold ; Pride is sometimes cringing ; Courage is sometimes timorous ; &c. But, without insisting on this, I say, let us only be sure, that the Mother's Imagination can produce something, and we will endeavour afterwards to reconcile Contradictions.

8. Dr. *Blondel* does not understand, why calm and sedate Passions, or Affections, should be so injurious to the Child, as to make any Signatures upon it ? What more proper Answer can we return to this, but that, as St. *Paul* says, *No Man knows the Spirit that is in Man, but Man* ; so, No Man knows what the Spirit of a Mother can do, but the Mother ? The Union of the Child with its Mother, I take to be such a Mystery, that I can compare it to nothing else, than to the Union of the Body with the Soul ; and we must not expect to understand the Wonders of either, until we are let into the whole Secret.

9. I am not obliged to justify Dr. *Turner's* Explanations of these Things ; and I am sorry Dr. *Blondel* does not relish his Expressions. But it is strange he should not understand how necessary and unavoidable it is, to use *metaphorical* Expressions on any thing that relates to *spiritual* Subjects, or whenever we talk of the subtle Operations of Spirits ! And consequently, how pardonable are these Words, *Exultation, Irradiation, and Ovation* of the Soul, or Spirit !

Spirits ! But I will follow another Method. I will wait 'till the Fact be universally acknowledged ; and then I will endeavour to give a more intelligible Account of the Matter, if possible.

10. Dr. *Blondel* asks, whether the common Notion is not silly and ridiculous, *That a Mother can direct, and convey, by the Application of her Hand, any Signature, to what Place she pleases ?* I answer, *it is not ridiculous, if it is true.* And I will take all the Care imaginable to know, whether it is false, before I pass any such Sentence.

II. He has reserved for the last Place, to attack *Malebranche's* Philosophical System, on the Power of Imagination in Women with Child : No doubt, as being the most finished Piece of Reasoning on this Head. I must own, I know no other Method to account *à priori* for these things. I am sorry the Doctor is not pleased with it ; but, as Opinions are free, I am very easy about it. I would not vindicate the Truth of that System neither : For I am resolved to be very certain of the Fact, of the *οτι*, before I determine about the *διοτι*, or Reasons. I shall therefore answer Dr. *Blondel's* Objections *directly* ; not as they fall on *Malebranche*, but as they relate to the Subject in hand.

1. *Malebranche* says, *There is a Communication of Thoughts between the Brain of the Mother and the Child ; and that the Children in the Womb receive the same Impressions of Objects, and are moved by the same Passions, as their Mothers.* It is plain, this must be taken in a philosophical Sense. These are metaphysical Notions ; and whoever interprets them literally, goes very much out of the way. If you do not understand them, it is a Misfortune for you. I do not suspect any such thing of Dr. *Blondel*, but I warn all other People, who do not understand it, not to meddle with it. *Procul, procul este profani.* You are not qualified for these Matters, if you have not a metaphysical Genius.

2. Dr.

2. Dr. *Blondel* opposes, That this Hypothesis is contrary to Anatomy, because there is no Communication of Nerves between the Mother and the Child. I am sensible, there is no Communication of Nerves : * but, since it is universally known, and never has been pretended, there was ; we must suppose, there is some other Means of Communication. Can any Body deny, there is a Union ? Does not the Child receive its Nourishment and Increase by the Vessels, that convey it, from the Mother ? And who can prove, there may not be a particular Transmission of *Spirits* that Way, sufficient to perform the Feats that are talked of, and we so much admire ? At least it must be granted, there is an intimate Union ; and we must not deny the Effects, because we are not yet well acquainted with the Nature or the Manner of it.

3. The Doctor pretends, 'tis contrary to the Nature of the Passions : And thereupon he presents us with a Definition of all the Passions, as he takes them from the famous Mr. *Lock*. I have nothing to oppose to these Definitions : I can only say, they are very just, but nothing to the Purpose. To be sure, the Child cannot reflect on all these Occasions in the same Manner, as the Mother does ; but it is impossible to understand how he may be affected unless we take these Doctrines, in the most *abstracted* and subtil Sense, in which they were understood by *Malebranche*. And since Mr. *Lock's* Definition affect not in the least our Dispute, I need not be concerned any more about them.

4. Dr. *Blondel* remarks further : To say, with *Malebranche*, that Children see, what the Mother

* N. B. This must not be affirm'd too positively neither : Since it is said, that the present celebrated Professor ALBINUS has found something like a Nerve within the umbilical String. *Aliquid nervuli simile vidit Albinus sub involucro umbilici.* Neville. Diff. Inaugur. de Allantoide.

ee ; that they bear the same Cries, &c. 'tis to say, in other Words, that Children can see without Light, and that they hear without the Vibration of the Air. I only beg in favour of *Malebranche*, that you would not suppose he was a Madman : And consequently I hope, you will acknowledge, these Words must be taken in another Sense, than *Dr. Blondel* represents.

Malebranche says also, *That we see all Things in God* : It is plain, he does not mean this, with our Eyes, as we see sensible Objects. But in the Sense, the Apostle says, *That in him we live, and move, and have our Being*, it is of Consequence necessary, that we see all Things in him : But let those understand it, who can. *Malebranche* certainly did not mean those Words in their literal Sense ; he looked on the Mother and Child, as a Compound, comparable to the Union of Soul and Body : And if you consider, that the Life of the Child is bound up with the Life of the Mother, you will be able to form some Notion of that particular State ; to conceive, what intimate Relation that is, distinct from all others ; and to comprehend how it is possible, there may be a Communication of Agitations and Affections in so close an Union.

5. Our Author's last Objection here, is, That the chief Symptoms which follow the most violent Passions, appear about the *Thorax* ; but that Children in *Utero*, having the Organs of Respiration in a State of Inaction, are exempted from these dreadful Symptoms. This Difficulty is intirely removed by what we have observed before, that the Condition of a Child in the Womb is a particular State, distinct from all others, and to be considered in a different Light accordingly.

6th, and lastly, I hope you will forgive me one Remark, which is indeed quite foreign to our Business at present ; but is nevertheless occasional, and

brought in by Dr. *Blondel*. He is pleased to quote Mr. *Hobbes*'s Definition of Laughter, *That it is a sudden Glory, arising from some sudden Conception of some Eminency in ourselves by Comparison with the Infirmary of others, or with our own formerly.* I am not of that Opinion; altho' the great Mr. *Addison* has given his Approbation to it. For I have frequently observed, that we laugh at many odd Accidents, which give us no Occasion to make any Comparison of ourselves with others. But Dr. *Blondel*'s Observation is worth Notice also, *viz. That very often there is no Possibility of Time of making any Reflection.* If you would understand the Nature of *Laughing*, I advise you rather to read the Chapter, where *Quintilian* treats of that Affection.

C H A P. VIII.

I SHALL take in here the Subject of two Chapters. Dr. *Blondel* is to shew, that *Anatomy is absolutely against the current Opinion.* I own, this Battery would be the most considerable, and dreadful, if it could be *absolutely* compleated, and demonstrated adequately: If it could evince an actual Impossibility for our Opinion. But our Knowledge in Anatomy is not so compleat! And besides, how can that hurt us? Since we never pleaded Anatomy; since we confess, that we understand nothing in the *Phænomenon*, nor know how to account for it; and since the whole Affair is not under the Reach and Cognizance of Anatomy. Is it fair to bring us before a Tribunal, whose Right we cannot acknowledge? However we will cope with him here.

I. He considers first, the System of Generation in general; the Substance of which comes to this, *That all the Parts of the Fœtus are actually existent somewhere, and delineated even before Conception, as a Plant in the Seed: That all the Parts, both small*

and great, internal and external, are in the *Ovum*; and though some appear later than others, yet they have been *Existents*, and have had their Beginning at the same Time: That all Animals are *ex Animale*, and that the *Ovum* is the proper *Nidus*, in which the Animalcule lodges itself; and by which it is nourished for a Time.

All I shall answer to this Argument, is, that this same Doctrine is as strong against the Production of Monsters; and yet whoever denied these?

If every one comes from his like, how comes there to be so many different anomalous Conceptions, and Births? Shall we say, that these were præexistent? Or, can we find any thing in Anatomy that will favour their Existence? And, if we must allow the Consequence that is drawn from this Doctrine, *viz.* That the *Fætus* must have been somewhere, ever since the Creation of the World, in the original *Ovum*, what shall we say to justify the Wisdom, and Goodness of God? But, before I push this Argument home, I desire them to account, from Anatomy, for the Production of Monsters, and I promise then to account for the Product of Imagination. In the mean while, I shall observe, that this Doctrine of the *Fætus* being somewhere, from the Beginning of the World, in the original *Ovum*, is grounded on the Doctrine of the infinite Divisibility of Matter, which, I fear, is ill applied, and worse understood: But I shall not enter into such philosophical Disputes.

II. Having considered the general System of Generation, he goes through the whole Course of Conception, and Pregnancy; describing every different Stage in this Progress; which he reduces to three; and, stopping at the End of each, he always makes the same Conclusion, *viz.* *That the Mother's Imagination can have no Effect upon the Child.* I need not repeat this *Crambe recodæ*, nor follow him in

this Progress. If the Ladies desire to be thoroughly informed, they will do well to read his Treatise: And I had much rather they should compare his Arguments with mine, than that they should take any thing at second Hand. Nay more, if they should be convinced by him, I should be glad to put an End to this Dispute, and submit to their Decision. I shall therefore answer this whole physiological Discourse by one general *Argument*; and then only make some few occasional *Reflections*, or scattered Observations.

§. The ARGUMENT. He might as well dissect the Brain, or the Liver, and stopping at every different Part, say; the Disorder of the *Hypochondriacs* cannot proceed from thence, nor from thence; the Imagination of the *Hypochondriacs* cannot lie in that Place, nor in this; There is no Connection betwixt this, or t'other, and the Imagination of the *Hypochondriacs*; this cannot be the Cause of vain Imaginations; there is no Communication of Vessels, no *Anastomosis*, no Dependence of one Part upon the other; and consequently it is impossible, any Man should imagine Things that are not, think himself a Goose, a Pig, a Wolf, &c. But will this do against Experience? Let this be applied to the present Case, and you will find it alike conclusive, to argue any thing from the Disposition of Parts, one Way, or t'other. I proceed now to the REFLECTIONS.

REFL. 1. If Dr. *Blondel* had been satisfied to say, only, as he does sometimes, *Hence it appears, how difficult it is for the Mother's Imagination to reach the Child, to have any Power, &c.* we should perfectly agree; but when he says, *'tis not possible*, who can bear it?

REFL. 2. The Doctor says (pag. 113.) That the Liquor, in which the *Ovum* swims, forces the tender *Pedicul* (if there be any) to give way: But
(pag.

(pag. 117.) he says, without the least Doubt, that this Liquor growing into a hard Substance, presses, like a *Tourniquet*, upon the *Pedicul* of the *Ovum*, and strangling the Vessels, cuts off all manner of Communication between the Mother, and the *Ovum*.

N. B. First he doubts, whether there be a *Pedicul*; and afterwards, without proving there is any, he pretends it is cut off by a *Tourniquet*. See what Weight there is in this Argument! For, supposing there was a *Pedicul*, who can ever prove such a Thing as a *Tourniquet*? Not to insist on the Folly of this metaphorical Expression. And all this Struggle is for no other End, but to maintain, that the *Ovum* is a distinct Individuum, *having no stronger Ties, than those of Contiguity*. O pudor! O stolidi *præcepta vesania voti*! BUCHAN. de Sph.

REFL. 3. In the Advertisement to his Book, he desires Dr. Turner, to declare the Page, and the Lines where he has asserted, That the Mother and Child (in Utero) are no more related, than when it is feeding on the Nurse's Knee, &c. I shall therefore, in Compliance with his Request, and in Defence of Dr. Turner, produce the Pages, and Lines of this present Treatise, where he asserts the same Thing, if not exactly in the same Words, at least entirely to the same Purpose, or Sense.

Thus (Page 118.) he says, it is plain in the second Stage, That the *Fætus* is an *Individuum* distinct and separate from the Mother's Body.

(Page 119.) He asserts, That the third Stage is not essentially different from the second, *the Fœtus remaining still a distinct Individuum from the Mother, with whom it is united by no other Means, than Contiguity*.

(Page 120.) He affirms, *There is no common Circulation of Blood between them; no Communication of Animal Spirits; they have not the same Sensation*. And in the next Paragraph, you will find these

very

very Words: “ In short the Child is as distinct
 “ from the Mother, as an Infant which is at the
 “ Breast, is separate from the Nurse, upon whose
 “ Milk it feeds, and 'tis no more possible, for the
 “ Mother's Imagination to act upon the *Fœtus in*
 “ *Utero*, than for a Nurse, by her Fancy, to make
 “ upon the sucking Babe any Mark or Impression.”

REFL. 4. The Inosculation, or *Anastomoses*, of the Veins with the Arteries cannot be demonstrated every where; but it may be demonstrated, that Circulation could not be carried on through the *Parenchyma* of the Antients; and therefore Dr. *Turner* may suppose, upon just Grounds, that the Veins and Arteries of the *Placenta* inosculate with those of the *Uterus*, although Anatomists have not yet discovered it by their Injections.

REFL. 5. That there is a Circulation of Blood in the Body of the *Fœtus*, distinct from the Mother's, is certain; but we are not less assured, that there is also a Circulation from the *Fœtus* to the Mother by Means of the umbilical Vessels.

REFL. 6. Dr. *Blondel* says (pag. 120.) That the *Fœtus* draws its Nourishment from the *Uterus*, insensibly, and like a Vegetable, which makes no Return to the Earth of what it receives from the Ground. And again (pag. 128) he repeats, That the Child adheres to the *Uterus*, as a Plant does to the Ground; and that it is no Part of the Mother, but a distinct Individuum. But the Comparison is false: For the Rev. Dr. *Hales*, and some others, have demonstrated, that there is a true Circulation of Sap in Vegetables, both ascending and descending, thro' distinct Vessels (analogous to Veins and Arteries) from the Earth, and back to the Earth again. And here I conclude, to put an End to these anatomical Reflections, by observing, that Dr. *Blondel* is in the right, to affirm more modestly at last, that Imagination alone cannot do the *Fœtus* any Injury.

C H A P. IX.

HIS very last Push is, that Marks and Deformities may be accounted for from other Causes. But this does not affect us in the least, since we don't deny it. *What Necessity is there, (says he) to have Recourse to Imaginary Causes, when Marks and Deformities can be accounted for in a natural Way?* No ceratinly. But on the other hand also, when *Imagination* is pleaded, and no other Cause appears, why should we have Recourse to *natural* ones? We did not want then his *Sketch of the Causes of Marks and Deformities*, which we knew before. I shall therefore only make some Remarks upon it, and so put an End to this tedious Refutation.

1. He says, *Don't we see the like every Day upon Vegetables, though they are not capable of Imagination?* I have reflected on this; but here are so many Wonders to be considered, that I defer my Answer to this Objection, for some other Occasion, Pag. 129.

2. *There are many considerable Deformities, which are never referred to Imagination, viz. The irregular Conformation of the Viscera, &c.* I acknowledge it: But does this better agree with the Principle, that all the Parts are before-hand formed *in Ovo*? Let us have an Answer to this Question, and I will then proceed further. Pag. 130.

3. *Should it not be very strange and unaccountable, and even next to a Miracle, if a tender Body, able to receive the least Impression, did not discover outwardly, by some Marks, or Deformities, the sad Effects of so many Distempers?* Here would be room for several Reflections. Distempers that happen to Children are of various Kinds; some seem to be derived from Father, and some from Mother; and the Causes of these

these are very hidden : But as for those which happen in the Womb, it is not easy to be understood, how any should be owing to the Place, and not to some extraordinary Accident, proceeding from the Mother. I have not Time to consider those great Difficulties. Observe only the Doctor's Expression : *If a tender Body, able to receive the least Impression* : Is not this, what we say ? Is not this the Reason, why Imagination may affect it ? When the Blood and Spirits are agitated and fluttered by the Passions and Affections of the Mother, may they not rush upon the Child with Violence, and leave their Impression on him ?
Pag. 133.

4. The honest *Hildanus*, that intelligent *Swiss*, is called again to account here : He tells us, That a Maid, not having made Fritters to her Mistress's Fancy, the Gentlewoman was brought to bed of a female Child, which had a round swelling on the small of the Back, very like a Fritter. Dr. *Blondel*, instead of allowing the Cause, is pleased to make a new Distemper of it, and calls it *Hernia spinalis*. *Hernia ventosa* indeed, is a Distemper incident to Children, in that same Place ; but *Hernia spinalis* is a wonderful Thing, of which I wish he had given us the true Cause, since he does not like *Imagination*. Not content with this, he banters still that worthy Author ; because he tells us, that the Mother had rubbed that Place with her Right-hand. Fie for shame ! Was he not bound to tell us every Particular ? What he had heard ? But the Doctor is angry, it was the *Right-hand*, as if it was not that we most readily use ! And he supposes besides, that the Deformity ought to have been about the Child's Lips, because the Fritter must have made the Gentlewoman's Mouth water. Comical ! Who can answer such Arguments ?

5. I shall not contradict here the physiological Accounts, he gives of some Deformities. They are very ingenious and probable. The Remark I am going to make, does not touch them; but nevertheless I may call it an Observation *ad hominem*. I have made you observe before, how ready the Doctor is to say, that Authors swallow greedily, whatever favours their System. Now you may remember, he rejected the Authority of *Blegny*, when he relates (pag. 24.) the Story of a Child born with Horns upon his Head: Nay, on this Occasion he applies these remarkable Words from *Pliny*, though he does not name him: * *One would think, that those Story-mongers have nothing in view, but to try the Credulity of good People, or to ridicule, and disgrace human Nature, and affront the Wisdom of our Maker.* Who would think, after this, that he should bring an Instance in his own Favour, from such a suspected, and deservedly irreputable Author, I mean *Blegny*? But here he quotes, without any Scruple, the most unwarrantable Story of all, from him: (Pag. 135.) *Blegny* tells us, *a Girl was born without Brain, and lived five Days.* Is it possible? Could the Doctor believe this? Are there not invincible Arguments from *Anatomy* against it? Could the Heart perform in its Functions without the Nerves, that come from the Brain? But if there was no Brain, where were the Nerves? I will not insist on this further. For my Part, I believe it is rather a malicious Sarcasm upon the Sex; as if it was nothing extraordinary, that Girls should have no Brains. O Prejudice! O Partiality!

* Sed hoc eâ in re, quæ quotidie invenitur, atque abundet, & hoc mendacium coarguat, serîo quemquam dixisse, summa hominum contemptio est, & intoleranda mendaciorum impunitas. Lib. 37. c. 2.

Quæ quidem scripsisse eos non sine contemptu & irrisu generis humani arbitror. ib. c. 9.

6. The Story of the Cooper's Wife (pag. 26.) who was delivered of a Child, whose Entrails hung out of the *Abdomen*, is brought before us again ; in order only to abuse afresh the so much injured *Greg. Horstius*.

The Doctor supposes here, as he did before in the History of the Calf (pag. 48.) that this Child *had a Distemper which hindered the Growth of the Integuments, or Muscles*. But *Horstius*, to make us understand only, how Imagination, possibly, could do the Effect, observes, that the *Viscera* are soft, and *hardly covered with the thinnest Membranes at this Time*. Who is most reasonable here ? The Doctor, in supposing a Distemper without Foundation ? Or *Horstius* in accounting for an Effect, after the most probable Manner ? I leave the Reader to judge.

I think it is now Time to draw towards a Conclusion. I have thoroughly weighed all the remaining Paragraphs of our Author's last Chapter. He represents once more that famous Principle, *viz. That there is no new Creation, and that the Rudiments of all Vegetables, and of all Animals now in Being, are à Principio* : He supposes, they may have received various Injuries, in all the preceding Successions, during the State of *Ova*, from one Generation to another. I have already observed, that this Principle is liable to great Difficulties ; I say further, that there is no end of tracing such remote Causes ; and that this will not prove, that Imagination is never concerned in the Business. Let these Causes be suspected, where Imagination is not accused ; but whenever it is certain Imagination was guilty, let us not accuse those Causes : Here it is, we may fitly apply an excellent Maxim of *Celsus*, *Rationalem puto Medicinam esse debere ; instrui verò ab evidentibus causis, obscuris omnibus non à cogitatione artificis, sed ab ipsa arte rejectis*. in *Præf.* And here it is, I think, I may leave *Dr. Blondel* defeated :
Having

Having nothing more to add, but the Contradictions, hinted at before, to be considered now at your Leisure, in one View.

Let this, however, be said in praise of Dr. *Blondel*, That he could not have defended a bad Cause better.

Referring to Pag. 14. above:

Contradictions of Dr. BLONDEL.

HE confesses (pag. 3.) in an ample Manner, *That the Child may suffer by the Affections of the Mother's Mind.* But this is contradicted strongly afterwards, as pag. 102. where he says, *That the Mother's Thoughts are extensive and peculiar to her, and without the Reach of the Child's Mind, which is yet not acquainted with the outward Objects, that disturb the Mother.* But more remarkably, pag. 114. where you will find these Words: *Now if the most violent of all Passions, and the likeliest to affect the Ovary, cannot at the Time mentioned, by increasing the Velocity of the Blood and Spirits, cause an Alteration in the Ovary, Why should Passions do it at other Times?*

But I would have you observe besides, That this is the Time, when FIENUS himself says, 'Tis very unlikely, that the Power of Fancy should be exerted: And that, for the very Reason, that the Doctor had assigned before, pag. 10. viz. That the *Latin* Admonition, *Mind what you do*, is never observed more strictly, than upon that Occasion.

And again, pag. 118. *Let our Passions be never so violent, yet they are confined within the Sphere of the Mind, and of the Body: By what Magick then is the Imagination of one Being, capable to affect another, which is entirely a different INDIVIDUUM?* Another Contradiction, pag. 3. He says, in Case
of

of Passions, 'Tis much to be feared, that the Blood flowing with great Vebemence towards the UTERUS, may separate the Placenta, and cause Abortion. But, pag. 121. He says, the *Impetus* of the Blood's Motion is broke before it can reach the Body of the Child, and consequently 'tis difficult to understand, how it is able to make any particular Impression upon the Embrio.

What more contradictory than the following Passages? pag. 97. He says, *If the Mother, by the Strength of her Fancy cannot make any Mark, or Signature on her Body, if she cannot change the Figure, Situation, Quantity, and Number of her Limbs: In short, if she cannot make a determinate Alteration in her own Body, by a determinate Imagination, Why should we believe, that she is able to do it in the Child.* But, pag. 139. He gives the very Reason for it, that we would give, for he says, 'Tis easy to conceive, that the Body of the Fætus, being soft and tender, is liable to be bruised and dashed in Pieces by the strong Convulsions of the Tubes, and those of the Uterus, and by the violent Contractions of the Muscles of the Abdomen, which do press upon it with great Force. Not to mention what I have already quoted, pag. 5. in stronger Terms still, *Now where is the Wonder, &c.*

N. B. I have observed, (pag. 53.) that Blegny is a suspected Author, and I cannot tell, whether here is not a further Proof of it. The Story related by the Doctor (pag. 24.) of a Child born with Horns upon his Head, and cloven Feet; because his Father having acted a Satyr, had knowledge of his Wife in that Dress: Seems to be the same with that related (pag. 56) from Ludov. Vives, of the Man, who having personated the Devil, would needs have to do with his Wife, in that Habit, and got by her a Child of the same Diabolical Figure.